

04 June 1985
MBK-5007

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT: Monthly Report - Bangkok Bureau - May 1985

I. GENERAL

A. The first piling at the Bang Ping receiver site for the ROSET structures was driven on 22 May.

B. With the seasonal rains having brought to a close an unusually successful Vietnamese dry-season offensive in Cambodia and with the annual vote on Cambodian representation in the UN clearly in mind, new political maneuverings and possibilities have surfaced in the Cambodian situation. The ASEAN grouping has proposed the idea of "proximity" talks between the parties, which are still mulling the possibilities and implications. ASEAN, with Indonesia in the lead, has again been linking the normalization of U.S. and Vietnam ties with a Cambodia settlement and claimed China's backing for this proposal. There are also reports that Prince Sihanouk, following his perennial threat to resign as president of the tripartite opposition coalition and the renewed international chorus of support for his position, has agreed to the linking of the military arm of his faction with that of Son Sann's nationalist faction to offset the third, Khmer Rouge, segment of the resistance. (Also, see the accompanying example of the Prince's personal style of international diplomacy, in the form of annotations, in French and English, of an article on the Cambodian question that had appeared in the Bangkok Post.)

C. Political and natural tragedies in South Asia heightened the importance of the bureau's coverage of that region when on 11 May a new form of terrorism surfaced in India -- the placement of bombs in transistor radios in congested urban areas -- and when cyclones in the Bay of Bengal on 25 May caused tidal waves that killed thousands in low-lying areas of Bangladesh.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The bureau has suspended wirefiling of program summaries and reception FYI's of the clandestine Voice of the People of Burma radio as of 1 June. The radio has been silent since 17 April, and during a subsequent visit to China by Burmese leader Ne Win, Beijing quoted him as saying "the problems in the past had all been solved." More recently, Chinese leader Hu Yaobang publicly stated that China would not give material support to communist insurgencies in the region. His statement was carried in Radio Beijing's broadcasts beamed to the region.

2. With headquarters concurrence, the wirefiling of Hanoi in Thai program summaries was discontinued as of 20 May.

B. Communications

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Following almost constant circuit problems since the bureau's primary communications circuit was rehomed to Clark [redacted] on 4 April, the circuit was temporarily switched [redacted] early in the month where it remains to date and for the foreseeable future. While we were on the Clark route, delivery of routine messages had been so slow that a couple of tracer actions had been instituted and switch delay times of a day or more were reported.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

The Thai language class, conducted at the bureau on weekday afternoons by an Embassy teacher for American staffers since 2 October 1984, has been discontinued pending a possible decision to restart a class after this summer's American staff rotations.

B. Buildings and Grounds

In anticipation of ROSET space needs, the first aid room and a large part of the common hall area on the top floor of the bureau have been turned into a commodious office for the admin unit. A new first aid room has been created in the reconfigured space of the former spare office. The former administrative area on the operations floor will be turned into two new monitorial booths and a new reception area.

IV. VISITS

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1. OEA analyst [redacted] visited the bureau 10 May.

2. Three IG officers visited on 14-15 May and discussed language incentive proposals with several U.S. staffers.

V. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

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Deputy Chief [redacted] as founding president of the Bangkok branch of the Chopin Society International, was (quite unexpectedly) invited to take an all-expense-paid trip to represent the branch on the presidium at the quinquennial International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw this coming October. [redacted] whose musical tastes focus on the Broadway stage and whose eyes roll back in his head at the thought of 19 straight hours of Chopin, narrowly escaped an international incident by pointing out that the society has a new president, a classical pianist, who not only was anxious to take the trip but was Asian and therefore a better representative of the Bangkok society.

[redacted]

Chief, Bangkok Bureau

Attachment:
Monthly Production Report

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Sihanouk seeks room for manoeuvring

SOME people never let you down. For any savagery covering Indochina, no one is probably more vicious than Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Not only is he one of the most outspoken and frank statesmen in the world, and more willing to deal with the Press than most, he also manages to make sure when everything else is a bit dull.

His letter of April 16 to the Deputy Vice President of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea Khieu Samphan once again removes the fear (or for some, the hope) that the Prince is about to leave the group.

Indeed the letter expresses his desire to resign from his position as President of the CGDK but says that, should such a resignation not be granted (and no one better than the Prince knows that he will be asked to stay), then he would only request, according to a source who saw a copy of the letter, a leave of absence for health reasons, for "one or two years."

It is clear the main reasons for this attempted resignation have little to do with the Prince's health, although his doctors would have nothing more than to see their "impossible patient" (his own words, during a private conversation) take a good rest.

There are of course a few problems within the coalition, but nothing that cannot be worked out between the various parties involved. Don't forget this unusual government is made up of people who had no burning desire to be associated too closely and finally did so for some very practical purposes. Tensions within similar movements are nothing sensational. Just take a look at the history of the French Resistance during World War II, or any group of people fighting a difficult war, with part of their leaders or supporters living far away from the scene. Exile does not make anything easier.

Nevertheless Sihanouk has always been a bit impotent with the warriors, those he calls the "Bellies Cambodians," the Kampuchean dreaming of taking back Phnom Penh with tanks and troops. He does not like war, he sees little benefit in extending the suffering of his people.

KAMPUCHEAN DIARY

After all he is a Buddhist and vice versa certainly has less and less room in his heart.

More than most Kampuchean leaders he is sceptical of the power of ready-made slogans and nicely worded resolutions. The United Nations General Assembly could dance on its head (as they say in French) but it would mean little if Hanoi and its powerful Soviet friends decide not to listen. A vote at the UN is not negligible. It is an embarrassment for Hanoi. It shows the world's concern. It prevents the oblivion of Kampuchea. But it is not going to change much of the situation on the field.

And, is what is going on in the field enough to convince the belligerent in one way or another to look for a different solution? Probably not at this point. An interesting comment was made recently to a visitor by the Vietnamese ambassador to the People's Republic of Kampuchea, Mr Ngu Dien. The ambassador, who is probably one of the best informed men on the scene, was unusually frank. He did not pretend the resistance had been wiped out along with the successful campaign against the border camps. Since the camps fell, he explained, there was an increase of incidents inside the country—although the general level of military activity was less than last year.

The resistance may challenge the last part of the statement but would probably agree with the description of its activity in the interior. The National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (the Khmer Rouge) is operating around Phnom Penh now. The attack against the former royal capital of Udong, some 40 kilometres from Phnom Penh, really took place.

on March 26 and was described by a Western journalist as the work of at least 100 soldiers, in uniform, well behaved and operating in full control of the situation. They did destroy several trucks (not tanks as claimed by a DK propagandist). An AFP correspondent reported that there is now a heavy search for visitors of the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh.

The Khmer Rouge are not the only ones to do something. The KPNLF pretend they have small teams of three or four men operating very close to the capital and are involved in sabotaging. The National Sihanouk Army, the surprise of the moment, is moving deeper in to the interior from its small bases in Oddar Meanchey province.

Ambassador Ngu Dien conceded

about the activity but went on to say that these are the resistance (I guess he called them "rebels" or "bandits") who run out of ammunition and food, since the border was being sealed and the supply lines were and more harassed.

With the prospect of a long stalemate and the conviction that some of the main parties involved in the conflict have no desire to accommodate the less very popular man, being the president of the coalition government gives him a lot of international recognition. But sometimes he feels it is a bit of a straitjacket. It does not leave him with enough room to manoeuvre. Some of his supporters are well aware of his worry and probably live in constant fear of his next unexpected move.

The offer, made by Phnom Penh, to have him back in Kampuchea as long as he quits the coalition and dissociates himself from the Khmer Rouge does not particularly appeal to him. Within the strict framework of the PRK constitution (modelled after the Vietnamese constitution) it would be difficult to give him more than a marginal role, maybe similar to the one allocated to the late Prince Souvanna Phouma in Laos.

But more and more Kampuchean watchers are convinced (and this is not just pure speculation) that several members of the present PRK government would be glad to see Prince Sihanouk come back to the country. As Khmer nationalists themselves they believe that Sihanouk, better than anyone else, would be able to balance the increasing weight not only of Hanoi but also of the Soviet Union in Kampuchea.

For the time being, he probably won't resign. And he will try to convince friends and foes alike that the only way out is to be reasonable.

—Jacques Bekaert

CHALLENGE

The resistance, of course, challenges this. There is no way the Vietnamese can seal the entire border, they say. It is too long (650 kilometers) and the terrain can be very difficult. "We still manage to go through," KPNLF and ANS members told us. "We have such quantity of ammunition in the interior we won't have problems for long," a senior Khmer Rouge told a Khmer nationalist. Food apparently is no special problem either. There is little that money cannot buy...

So, even with the border camps gone, it seems the war will go on, more and more, in fact, with no one in the position to win, or lose.

This is one of the concerns of Prince Sihanouk. The longer it goes on, the

BANGKOK BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR MAY 1985

I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	709,990
TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	280,830
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH:	1,727

BROAD-CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLICATION
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II. <u>INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE:</u> (minutes or issues per week)	19,475	20,450	253.00
	min.	min.	issues

III. <u>OUTPUT FROM ALL SOURCES:</u> (publishable words per month)

AUSTRALIA

Melbourne Overseas Service in English	18,000
Sydney THE AUSTRALIAN in English	1,590
Sydney THE BULLETIN in English	0
Sydney THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN in English	0

BANGLADESH

Dhaka Domestic Service in Bengali	850
Dhaka Domestic Service in English	3,470
Dhaka Overseas Service in Bengali	80
Dhaka Overseas Service in English	270
Dhaka BSS in English	2,440
Dhaka SANGBAD in Bengali	0
Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English	70

BRUNEI

Kuala Belait THE BORNEO BULLETIN in English	0
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BURMA

Rangoon Domestic Service in Burmese	10,180
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BROAD-CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLICATION
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Rangoon BOTATAUNG in Burmese	3,380
Rangoon LOKTHA PYEITHU NEZIN in Burmese	0
Rangoon MYANMA ALIN in Burmese	0
Rangoon WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY in English	3,360

CHINA

Beijing International Service in Bengali	0
Beijing International Service in Burmese	7,330
Beijing International Service in Indonesian	3,690
Beijing International Service in Lao	0
Beijing International Service in Thai	250
Beijing in Cambodian to Kampuchea	1,380
Beijing in Hindi to India	0
Beijing in Malay to Malaysia	280
Beijing in Urdu to India and Pakistan	0

CLANDESTINE

(Clandestine) Vietnam Resistance Radio in Vietnamese	0
(Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian	25,000
(Clandestine) Voice of Malayan Democracy in Malay	12,820
(Clandestine) Voice of The National Army Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian	12,680
(Clandestine) Voice of The People of Burma in Burmese	0
(Clandestine) Voice of The People of Malaysia in Malay	2,200

HONG KONG

Hong Kong AFP in English	0
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INDIA

Delhi Domestic Service in English	73,360
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	<u>BROAD-CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLICATION</u>
Delhi Domestic Service in Hindi	1,100		
Delhi Domestic Service in Tamil	80		
Delhi General Overseas Service in English	5,690		
Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English	390		
Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English	2,180		
Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA in Bengali	980		
Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English	350		
Delhi INDIA TODAY in English	0		
Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English	5,710		
Delhi NATIONAL HERALD in English	1,000		
Delhi PATRIOT in English	730		
Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English	0		
Madras THE HINDU in English	0		

INDONESIA

Jakarta Domestic Service in Indonesian	7,180
Jakarta International Service in English	1,290
Jakarta BERITA BUANA in Indonesian	2,350
Jakarta JAKARTA POST in English	710
Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian	9,040
Jakarta MERDEKA in Indonesian	10,080
Jakarta SINAR HARAPAN in Indonesian	5,550
Jakarta TEMPO in Indonesian	5,590
Jakarta THE INDONESIA TIMES in English	0

KAMPUCHEA

Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian	47,550
Phnom Penh SPK in English	12,340

<u>BROAD-</u>	<u>PRESS</u>	<u>PUBLI-</u>
<u>CASTS</u>	<u>AGENCIES</u>	<u>CATION</u>

Phnom Penh SPK in French	6,770
Phnom Penh SPK in French to KPL Vientiane	0
Phnom Penh VNA in Vietnamese to VNA Hanoi	0

LAOS

Vientiane Domestic Service in Lao	44,110
Vientiane KPL in English	20,230
Vientiane KPL in English/French to SPK Phnom Penh	0
Vientiane SPK in French to SPK Phnom Penh	0
Vientiane VNA in Vietnamese to VNA Hanoi	0
Vientiane PASASON in Lao	0

MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in English	5,300
Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in Malay	2,160
Kuala Lumpur International Service in English	9,940
Kuala Lumpur BERITA HARIAN in Malay	500
Kuala Lumpur BERITA MINGGU in Malay	0
Kuala Lumpur MINGGUAN MALAYSIA in Malay	0
Kuala Lumpur NEW STRAITS TIMES in English	2,770
Kuala Lumpur NEW SUNDAY TIMES in English	0
Kuala Lumpur UTUSAN MALAYSIA in Malay	0

NEPAL

Katmandu External Service in English	3,180
Katmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English	260

PAKISTAN

Karachi Domestic Service in English	14,270
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<u>BROAD-CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLICATION</u>
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Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu	14,420
Karachi Overseas Service in Urdu	590

SINGAPORE

Singapore Domestic Service in English	1,440
Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English	1,290
Singapore THE SUNDAY TIMES in English	380

SRI LANKA

Colombo Domestic Service in English	220
Colombo Domestic Service in Tamil	90
Colombo International Service in English	5,710
Colombo International Service in Hindi	2,710
Colombo DAILY NEWS in English	0
Colombo SUN in English	1,370
Colombo WEEKEND in English	0

THAILAND

Bangkok Domestic Service in English	5,790
Bangkok Domestic Service in Thai	14,160
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Cambodian	2,280
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in English	2,700
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Lao	0
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Thai	2,900
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Vietnamese	2,080
Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English	37,110
Bangkok BANGKOK WORLD in English	14,500
Bangkok DAO SIAM in Thai	530
Bangkok LAK THAI in Thai	3,290

<u>BROAD-CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLICATION</u>
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Bangkok MATICHON SUT SAPDA in Thai	910
Bangkok MATICHON in Thai	2,970
Bangkok MATUPHUM in Thai	0
Bangkok NAEO NA in Thai	1,230
Bangkok PATINYA in Thai	0
Bangkok SIAM RAT SAPDA WICHAN in Thai	1,330
Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai	2,190
Bangkok SU ANAKHOT in Thai	930
Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai	1,300
Bangkok THE NATION REVIEW in English	25,390
Bangkok WIWAT in Thai	1,280

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Moscow International Service in Tamil	0
Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Indonesian	0
Moscow in Bengali to Bangladesh	1,580
Moscow in Burmese to Burma	1,680
Moscow in Cambodian to Kampuchea	2,310
Moscow in Hindi to India	1,950
Moscow in Indonesian to Indonesia	540
Moscow in Lao to Laos	600
Moscow in Thai to Thailand	1,390
Moscow in Urdu to India	0
Moscow in Urdu to Pakistan	2,110

UNITED KINGDOM

London BBC World Service in English	5,840
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<u>BROAD-</u>	<u>PRESS</u>	<u>PUBLI-</u>
<u>CASTS</u>	<u>AGENCIES</u>	<u>CATION</u>

VIETNAM

Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese	92,720
Hanoi International Service in Cambodian	0
Hanoi International Service in English	6,540
Hanoi International Service in Thai	3,350
Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese to NHAN DAN Ho Chi Minh City	0
Hanoi VNA in English	4,370
Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese	11,080
Hanoi QUAN DOI NHAN DAN in Vietnamese	5,640
Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese	5,140